

statesman, and visionary adviser to America's most senior national leaders.

Gen. Binnie Peay grew up in Virginia. He graduated with honors from the Virginia Military Institute, and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the field artillery. He served two tours in Vietnam, with the 4th Division and the 1st Cavalry Division, and was decorated for valor. Following the war, General Peay served a succession of high profile and influential staff and command positions, including Executive to the Chief of Staff of the Army, commandant of the command and general staff college at Fort Leavenworth, and assistant division commander of the 101st Airborne Division. During these years, General Peay was one of a number of officers and enlisted personnel who helped restore integrity, morale, and spirit to the Army in the wake of the Vietnam war.

In 1989, General Peay took command of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) at Fort Campbell, KY. The division deployed to the Arabian Gulf in August 1990 as part of Operation Desert Shield. During Operation Desert Storm, the 101st made the longest, most rapid heliborne assault in the history of warfare, deploying more than 150 miles behind enemy lines to block Iraqi reinforcements and lines of communications.

During the period 1991 to 1994, General Peay served as Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, and then as Vice Chief of Staff of the Army. In 1994, the President named him to his current assignment, Commander in Chief of U.S. Central Command. During this 3-year tour, General Peay set the stage for preserving regional peace and stability over the long term, while enhancing our Nation's ability to respond to any contingency.

Mr. Speaker, Gen. J.H. Binford Peay III is a preeminent military thinker, a master of tactics and strategy, and an expert on the intricacies of senior level military management and command. I know the Members of the House will join me in offering our heartfelt gratitude to General Peay and his family—his wife, Pamela, and sons, Jim and Ryan—for their service to our Nation, and wish them all the best in the years ahead.

SIXTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF UKRAINE

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 1997

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, today, we here in the Congress are making the sixth anniversary of the independence of Ukraine. The formal and official anniversary falls upon August 24, but because the Congress was in recess at that time, we are celebrating this historic occasion today.

Six years ago, on August 24, 1991, the parliament of Ukraine approved a declaration of independence and affirmed the sovereignty of Ukraine. That took place, as some of my colleagues will recall, in the midst of the abortive coup against Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev by military leaders and Communist hard liners in Moscow. The decisive action of

Ukraine at that time sounded the death knell for the old Soviet Union. Independence was declared earlier by the Baltic Republics, but the key factor was Ukraine's courageous declaration of independence. It was followed by declarations of independence by Byelorussia, Moldova, and the Central Asian Republics. The decision of the Ukrainian parliament—the Supreme Rada—was followed by a popular referendum held on December 1, in which the people of Ukraine overwhelmingly voted to separate from the Soviet Union and establish a sovereign and independent state.

It is hard to believe that these tumultuous events took place only 6 years ago, Mr. Speaker. In these past 6 years, the Ukraine has had to deal with a multitude of extremely difficult problems. First, the country has had to deal with the transition to democracy and the creation of a free-market economy, and this has required dealing with serious political and economic issues. Second, at the same time, the people of Ukraine and their government institutions have had to deal with creating separate State institutions and establishing a separate national identity because Ukraine has not existed as a separate and independent country for centuries. Third, the country has been saddled with the legacy of the failed Soviet economic and political system. The tragedy of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster in northern Ukraine is only the best known and most visible consequence of eight decades of Communist Party incompetence and misrule.

As the second largest country in area in Europe, and as one of the largest countries in Europe in population, Ukraine is a vital and an important friend of the United States. Strong relations between our two countries are important to secure stability and prosperity in Central and Eastern Europe.

In the 6 years of independence, the Government of Ukraine has made a number of difficult choices—nuclear weapons have been removed from the territory. In July of this year, Ukraine and NATO have signed a charter affirming the commitment of NATO and Ukraine to the “development of a strong, enduring relationship between NATO and Ukraine.” The importance of Ukraine and our commitment to its success is clearly indicated by the level of United States foreign assistance to Ukraine—it receives the third largest amount of assistance of all country in the world.

While we celebrate Ukraine's independence, Mr. Speaker, this does not mean that all of the problems of Ukrainian independence have been resolved. Ukraine must accelerate its economic reforms, in order to assure a stable and prosperous economy. Democratic institutions and practices must be accelerated. There is still a long way to go in achieving full respect for human rights in Ukraine, including firmly establishing such fundamental rights as freedom of religion, freedom of speech, and freedom of the press. The problem of corruption and crime must be dealt with in order to assure a successful democratic government and functioning economy. While we note these serious problems, we also reaffirm our commitment to work with the Government of Ukraine in dealing with them.

This festive occasion is an opportunity for us to look back over the past 6 years and marvel and rejoice in the great progress that has been made, but it is also an occasion

when we can look to the future and recommit ourselves to the still-daunting tasks that the people of Ukraine face. The American people support Ukraine. We welcome your triumphs and we are willing to work with you in achieving the goals that both our countries seek in assuring the continuing independence and prosperity of Ukraine.

Mr. Speaker, on this sixth anniversary of Ukrainian independence, I congratulate the people of Ukraine on this joyous national occasion. The relationship between the United States and Ukraine is an important one for both of our countries, and this occasion is a happy one for us to reaffirm our commitment to good relations and cooperation.

THE RE-OPENING OF THE SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCE CENTER

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 17, 1997

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the occasion of the re-opening of the Small Business Resource Center in Charleston, SC, that will serve existing and prospective small business entrepreneurs throughout the State of South Carolina. Statistics reveal that a large percentage of businesses fail due to a lack of management knowledge and business experience. This Small Business Center will provide informational seminars and technical assistance, as well as education and training on a continual basis to help small business entrepreneurs achieve and maintain success in their business endeavors. We are very fortunate in the city of Charleston to have a centralized location where individuals can get necessary information, and where all services are free of charge.

Continuing its commitment to small business, Apple Computer, Inc. is donating state-of-the-art equipment, software, and seminar consulting assistance to the Charleston Small Business Resource Center. This remarkable facility will allow individuals and small business owners to research, plan, and jump-start their businesses and to receive free consulting from SCORE [Service Corps of Retired Executives Association] volunteers. Individuals will use the latest Macintosh technology to develop business plans, create marketing materials, develop loan packages, and conduct market and competitive researches.

The Small Business Resource Center in Charleston is the result of a national agreement between the U.S. Small Business Administration, the U.S. Department of Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency, and NationsBank to commit tangible resources aimed at increasing the success rate of small- and minority-owned businesses through education and technical assistance. The College of Charleston and Bell South also played vital roles in the opening of the South Carolina center.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that my colleagues join me in commending all those involved in reopening the Small Business Resource Center by forging partnerships that will embrace and encourage small businesses throughout the State of South Carolina.